

Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners meeting July 12, 2021 AM session

CB—Chris Branch, BOCC chair, District 1
AH – Andy Hover, BOCC vice-chair, District 2
LJ—Lalena Johns-clerk to the Commissioners
MW - Mike Wordon (Sheriff's Dept)
CH – Cari Hall (Auditor)

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note takers comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://www.countywatch.org/> and are not the official county record of the meeting. For officially approved minutes, which are normally published at a later time, see <https://okanogancounty.org/Commissioners/Minutes%202021/2021%20Minutes%20Page.html>

The time stamps refer to the times on the AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date. Click [here](#) to go to video.

Summary Of Significant Discussion

1:22 – Discussion about Fairgrounds (maintenance, management, etc)

37:30 – Discussion about Broadband project and how county communications system could interface with it.

1:05:40 – Auditor Cari Hall discusses Fairgrounds budget issues with BOCC

1:38:00 – AH and CB engage in conversation about Methow Watershed Council and options for replacing it with a new advisory group.

1:22 - CB & AH discuss condition of infrastructure at Fairgrounds.

4:20 – CB & AH shift discussion to management issues at Fairgrounds.

7:30 – AH tells CB that if his management style is causing issues he is willing to step back from his interaction with fairgrounds personnel.

12:00 – CB talks about the need to address systemic issues with Fairgrounds management, and also have clear lines of communication.

15:30 – Discussion about staffing RV park at Fairgrounds.

18:00 – Discussion about a water leak at Fairgrounds.

24:40 – Discussion about the concept of converting the Fair Board to a non-profit organization. AH relates history of the Fair and notes that it originally was owned and operated by an organization called “Boots and Saddle”. It was not sustainable, so it was turned over to the county. State Auditor had a finding regarding how the finances were handled which has led to current arrangement.

34:25 – Mike Wordon (Sheriff Dept) arrives

36:00 – AH asks about when emergency transfer switch will arrive. (This apparently for the County offices emergency power supply). MW states that it most likely won't be until September.

37:30 – MW reports on Broadband Action Team (BAT) for the Okanogan Valley (excludes the Methow Valley area). Funding is going to be available, and the BAT wanted to put one project

forward to focus on. There are 12 project areas outlined, and the Pine Creek area is the one chosen for the first funding. PUD will be making the application – deadline is coming right up in just a few days. How can the Emergency Services communications leverage this to help get fiber to their site? Possible other funds could be used to supplement if needed. BOCC votes to provide a letter of support for the Pine Creek project.

58:15 – AH mentions that the Methow Watershed Council has no more funds for admin. Need to find a way to fund them.

1:01:30 – AH reads from RCW regarding county's ability to hire someone to operate Fairs.

1:05:40 – Auditor Cari Hall and one other person arrive. AH asks CH about a particular RCW that she cited in a report regarding a sewage fund.

1:11:00 – Discussion among attendees about why they are having this meeting. When Fair Events coordinator submitted her resignation, there was a concern that the financial details should be in order. Now that the Fair Events Coordinator has withdrawn her resignation, there is no longer a concern. General discussion about how the financial part of running the fair operates. CH typically volunteers to be on site to handle the money and will do so this year.

1:15:35 – CH reports that State Auditor is in the middle of an audit and it's going very well.

Only the Federal and financial portion right now, will do the remainder later.

1:16:55 – Discussion of Fair budget with focus on maintenance side. LJ mentions that the coordination between the Fair employees, the County Maintenance Dept, and the BOCC could be much more efficient (in regards to tracking budget items).

1:22:40 – CH mentions that it will be necessary to approve a budget supplemental to Fairgrounds for maintenance. Discussion about how much it should be, and where to take the money from. It is decided to take it out of PILT. PILT fund is very healthy this year. AH suggests that all surplus PILT \$ be transferred to the contingency fund.

1:34:00 – CH gives short update on her department. Main thing is that the new voters pamphlet put together by her staff is fantastic. This is the very first voter pamphlet that contains local candidates. They are very proud of the result.

1:38:00 – Continued discussion about funding of Methow Watershed Council. AH suggests that the MWC be converted into an advisory committee to the BOCC rather than it's current format. CB and AH engage in long discussion about pros and cons and differ in opinion on how such a committee should be structured. AH wishes to have a large group with many stakeholders that is created and controlled by the county. CB prefers authorizing the committee under one of the State planning Acts and keeping it smaller.

1:56:25 – Morning session adjourned.